



# **Intron retention in mRNA encoding ancillary subunit of insect voltage-gated sodium channel modulates channel expression, gating regulation and drug sensitivity.**

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## Résumé en anglais

Insect voltage-gated sodium (Nav) channels are formed by a well-known pore-forming  $\alpha$ -subunit encoded by para-like gene and ancillary subunits related to TipE from the mutation "temperature-induced-paralysis locus E." The role of these ancillary subunits in the modulation of biophysical and pharmacological properties of Na(+) currents are not enough documented. The unique neuronal ancillary subunit TipE-homologous protein 1 of *Drosophila melanogaster* (DmTEH1) strongly enhances the expression of insect Nav channels when heterologously expressed in *Xenopus* oocytes. Here we report the cloning and functional expression of two neuronal DmTEH1-homologs of the cockroach, *Periplaneta americana*, PaTEH1A and PaTEH1B, encoded by a single bicistronic gene. In PaTEH1B, the second exon encoding the last 11-amino-acid residues of PaTEH1A is shifted to 3'UTR by the retention of a 96-bp intron-containing coding-message, thus generating a new C-terminal end. We investigated the gating and pharmacological properties of the *Drosophila* Nav channel variant (DmNav1-1) co-expressed with DmTEH1, PaTEH1A, PaTEH1B or a truncated mutant PaTEH1 $\Delta$ (270-280) in *Xenopus* oocytes. PaTEH1B caused a 2.2-fold current density decrease, concomitant with an equivalent  $\alpha$ -subunit incorporation decrease in the plasma membrane, compared to PaTEH1A and PaTEH1 $\Delta$ (270-280). PaTEH1B positively shifted the voltage-dependences of activation and slow inactivation of DmNav1-1 channels to more positive potentials compared to PaTEH1A, suggesting that the C-terminal end of both proteins may influence the function of the voltage-sensor and the pore of Nav channel. Interestingly, our findings showed that the sensitivity of DmNav1-1 channels to lidocaine and to the pyrazoline-type insecticide metabolite DCJW depends on associated TEH1-like subunits. In conclusion, our work demonstrates for the first time that density, gating and pharmacological properties of Nav channels expressed in *Xenopus* oocytes can be modulated by an intron retention process in the transcription of the neuronal TEH1-like ancillary subunits of *P. americana*.

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